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## EDITORIALS

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### A NECESSARY COMPLEMENT TO THE INDETERMINATE SENTENCE.

The state of Illinois has recently added one more to the already great number of illustrations of rational educational measures applied to convicts. It is reported that an "honor squad" of twenty-nine prisoners has just returned to the state prison at Joliet from Dixon, where they have spent five months in working on the roads. They had promised that if they were given a chance they would make good and return to the prison when required to do so. No untoward incidents occurred, and the men vindicated the claim that the honor system of employing convicts outside of the prison walls is a practical reality.

Another instance of rational penology is the recently announced plan to compensate prisoners for their labor in the Chicago House of Correction.

We are surely moving toward the conception of the proper treatment of convicts as essentially educational in its nature. Accordingly, we are recognizing the fact that the motives that make for adjustment in normal social life must be supplied to thousands of delinquents, juvenile and adult, who are motiveless, or relatively so. But every man of affairs understands that he cannot develop among his employes a motive to loyal service in his establishment, and that he cannot adapt them to the complex requirements of his industrial or commercial occupation if he places them in the midst of an environment that is far from normal, under the eye, it may be, of an unsympathetic inspector: a martinet who conceives it to be his whole function to bend the individualities of his men to an unyielding program, and who estimates their worth on the basis of their readiness to submerge their individualities beneath the machinery. This attitude, by the way, is a hold-over, in another form, of the conventionality that has associated "goodness" with a certain anaemic passivity, determined a certain traditional character of the scholar and the divine throughout several generations, and giving an objective sanction to the old saw: "The good die young." In every effort at education, the purpose should be to allow the greatest freedom of expression consistent with the well-being of the community. This is a universal principle, unlimited by the school house, prison, or any other institution.

## PREVENTION OF DELINQUENCY

All this suggests the further observation, of which Dr. Max Kauffmann makes much in his *Die Psychologie des Verbrechens*, that our whole system of indeterminate sentence and release on parole must fail to justify itself if we can have no other evidence of fitness for parole than that afforded by the behavior of a prisoner whose penal life has been spent only under the unremitting vigilance of the inspector or guard. Behavior in such conditions of enforced repression is no certificate of behavior in freedom. Prison officials and boards of parole who are working under the indeterminate sentence need the honor system as applied to the labor of prisoners away from the prison plant, or the opportunity for the employment of their wards in the relatively free labor upon the farm; and withal they must be able to offer compensation for prison labor in order to gain evidence of fitness to use the larger freedom of parole in an approved manner. If such evidence is obtained at all, it can hardly be got as long as the prospective subject for parole has little or no opportunity to show his ability to use a little freedom. He lacks the only effective motives: those of normal life. The honor system, or the large prison farm, one or both of them, with compensation, are the necessary complement to the plan of indeterminate sentence and parole.

ROBERT H. GAULT.

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## PREVENTION OF DELINQUENCY.

Holland, even in the XVIth century, had introduced the beginnings of industrial training. Indeed, the ancient Jewish traditions had never been quite forgotten. The propositions of Professor Gault, (see the last issue of this Journal, p. 637), based on psychological principles and educational experiences, are confirmed by many actual trials of former times. The plan was quite fully developed in the classic of Luis Vives, *De subventionem pauperum*, in his recommendations to the city fathers of Bruges in 1526. Pestalozzi had a clear insight into the principles involved, and multitudes of sensible parents have stumbled upon the same discovery. It is strange that the plan has been so slowly accepted in practice in the public schools. One historical illustration is worthy of notice and its repetition here may help to drive home conviction.

In 1788, some able scholars and statesmen of Hamburg, after long deliberation, reorganized the system of poor relief in such a way as to attract the attention of all civilized nations and influence the subsequent development of public and private charity. They found that a large number of children were growing up indolent, unclean, savage, ignorant; a burden to their parents and a menace to public finances and order.